



An exciting day in Glacier Studies



One of the National Snow and Ice Data Center’s scientists took several photographs of Perito Moreno glacier as an iceberg was calving from the face of the glacier in February, 2001. The following images show a large pinnacle of ice calving from the Perito Moreno Glacier in Argentina. The calving pinnacle is most clearly visible in the center of the first photograph. The terminus of the glacier is about 150 feet high, and the photographs were taken while looking across the lake at the face of the glacier. In spite of the “slow motion” effect in these photographs, the calving actually happens quite rapidly. As the ice breaks away from the glacier face, it often makes a loud cracking or booming sound. Viewers report that if you’ve heard the “boom”, and you start to look around, it’s already too late to get a photograph.

In some of the photographs, notice how blue parts of the glacier ice appear. Years of compression make the ice so dense that it absorbs every other color of the spectrum, thus appearing blue. (Photographs courtesy of Martyn Clark, National Snow and Ice Data Center, University of Colorado, Boulder.)

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